56. External relationships, 580-450 BCE

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Keywords: Athens, Attic pottery, Etruscan market, Bologna, Kamiros Macri Langoni

Introduction

This chapter deals with the importation of Attic pottery, which set in with transport amphorae with typical SOS decoration on the neck shortly before the middle of the seventh century BCE, which are found exclusively in particularly rich burials such as the Regolini-Galassi tomb in Caere.[1] Around 600, the pottery imported from Athens gradually rose both in quantity and quality (fine wares appeared for the first time), and from the second quarter of the sixth century onward it dominated the entire Italian—and specifically the Etruscan—market. Since the beginnings of the importation of Attic vases have recently been studied, this need not be discussed here.[2] The chapter looks more closely at certain aspects of the peak period of Attic importation, which lasted from the middle of the sixth to the early fourth century. In addition, for selected aspects the chapter examines the situation in Greece itself.

The chapter has been translated by S. Meinel.

1 Johnston and Jones 1978, 119 (Vatican 20359).

2 Reusser 2013.

1 Etruscan customers

A few years ago I undertook a critical reconsideration of this topic and developed a new model of interpretation, putting forward several theses.[3]

Since a large quantity of Attic vases had been found in funeral contexts, it was commonly held that such pottery must have had a specifically funerary dimension, that these vases were intended for tombs in the first place, and that Etruscan customers bought them for this purpose. This is unlikely to have been the case, however, because Attic vessels of the same shape and imagery were present in Etruria in greater numbers in both private dwellings and public sanctuaries. Significantly, Attic vases were distributed in large numbers throughout Etruria and are found in coastal and inland areas. There is evidence to suggest that in the main sites the quality of the imports was higher than in the smaller cities and the villages in the hinterlands.

Figural pottery clearly dominates the archaeological record. In addition, most Etruscan settlements, sanctuaries, and necropolises yield Attic black-gloss ware, albeit in considerably smaller quantities.[4] These types of pottery complement each other in terms of shape, with smaller shapes dominating in black-gloss. It is also worth pointing out that the question of individual painters or potters—which has so concerned many a Classical archaeologist—does not seem to have played any significant role for Etruscan customers.

Much Attic pottery has been found in Etruscan sanctuaries.[5] This is true not only for the large sanctuaries of the main sites in southern Etruria but also for sanctuaries of smaller settlements, for humble sacral precincts outside the cities, and for remote shrines in rural areas. Attic pottery must therefore have commonly belonged to the inventory of Etruscan sanctuaries from the sixth to the early fourth century.

These Attic vases may well have fulfilled several functions in Etruscan sanctuaries, as was the case in Greece.[6] They either belonged to the actual cultic apparatus and served as dishes on the occasion of sacred meals (which are well known from Greek contexts and which, it seems, are to be assumed for Etruria as well); or they were brought to the sanctuaries as votive offerings, as is suggested by the dedicatory inscriptions which are occasionally found.[7] From the shapes of these vases it can tentatively be inferred that Attic imported pottery was primarily used for drinking, and potentially used for libations in sacred rituals. In the cases where only a single

3 Reusser 2002, 1:204–6. Cf. also Shapiro 2000; Osborne 2001; Lewis 2003; Spivey 2006.

4 E.g., the case of the Attic pottery from the votive deposit of the northern sanctuary at Gravisca; Fortunelli 2007, 55–149.

5 Reusser 2002, 36–45; 2:66–100, 146–47. See Fortunelli and Masseria 2009, 217–386.

6 See Stissi 2003, 77–79; Fortunelli and Masseria 2009, 13–55, 89–162.

7 Maggiani 1997.

or very few Attic vessels are known in an Etruscan sanctuary, these objects are, with few exceptions, cups.

Athenian vessels belonged to the usual inventory of simple as well as more complex Etruscan houses.[8] Again, this is true not only for larger cities but also for smaller villages and even individual estates, in coastal as well as inland areas.

The frequency of cups, *skyphoi*, and, to a lesser degree, kraters in the context of most Etruscan settlements underlines the fact that, as concerns private houses, the importation from Attica is to be seen in connection with banquets and symposia. Whether these vessels were used in daily life or whether they served festive and representative purposes is, however, a question that remains unanswered.

In the sixth and fifth centuries, Attic vases were commonly used as funeral offerings in the bigger cities as well as in the smaller centers and villages.[9] It is therefore erroneous to regard these vases as luxury items, because Attic pottery was used not only by the elite but also by people from a wider social spectrum, in both urban and rural areas. Men, women and children received Attic vessels as burial offerings, which were of equal quality; no distinctions seem to have been made in terms of shape or imagery. A detailed study of child burials in Spina has shown, however, that at least in the case of children, there was likely a more complex situation.[10] Unfortunately, similar studies for other Etruscan necropolises are lacking.

A survey of a larger number of funeral contexts shows that in many cases a conscious choice of form and—at least partly—imagery can be demonstrated. It must therefore be assumed that Etruscan customers did not buy Attic vessels at random but made conscious selections. Most of the black-figure and red-figure imagery on imported vases possessed certain meanings for the Etruscans, who had a rich world of mythological images. Even though this imagery was closely connected to its Greek counterpart, it was Etruscan. Moreover, these were meanings that Etruscan viewers could "read" and interpret.

For the Etruscan customer, the shape of the pottery imported from Athens was of central importance.[11] Most Attic shapes were popular in Etruria, too, and met with a ready market. Conversely, individual Athenian workshops are known to have copied certain Etruscan shapes and to have produced them almost exclusively for an Etruscan market, in particular for Caere or Vulci.[12] This seems to be the story told by the manifold examples of Nikosthenic *Bandhenkel* amphorae, *kyathoi*, mastoid cups, stands with half-cylinders, and *stamnoi* which Etruscan sites yield regularly. The

8 Reusser 2002, 1:30–36; 2:31–63, 142–45.
9 Reusser 2002, 1:110–22.
10 Muggia 2004, 39–45.
11 Reusser 2002, 1:124–39.
12 Cf. the overview in Rasmussen 1985.

potters in the Athenian *Kerameikos* must have been well aware of the possibilities of a flourishing Etruscan market.

For the most part, the shapes of Attic pottery in Etruscan tombs, like those in houses, can be seen in a clearly functional context. Storage jars for wine and water, vessels for libations and for drinking, and oil flasks form comprehensive table services for drinking and libations. Such sets were part of a "symposium culture", which in Etruscan society must have played an important role in daily life, cult activities, and funerary rites.

Several years ago, Karim Arafat and Catherine Morgan presented a stimulating paper discussing some general aspects of the significance of Attic pottery in Etruria (and some Celtic territories).[13] They were correct to postulate that certain types of material gain new and different meanings in the transition from the primary culture to a secondary cultural context and that it is of particular importance to examine their new meaning in the recipient society. The following analysis adds a further dimension by suggesting that comparison with the situation of the producing culture, too, can yield useful results and is in fact indispensable because it leads to new insights into the nature and significance of the cultural contacts between two societies. As the two authors emphasize, Attic pottery was mainly a possession in private hands and was produced primarily for the home market. It did not rank among the most important commercial articles of merchant ships, and traders and middlemen from various regions of Greece and probably Etruria itself were involved.[14] Nonetheless, there are many hints to suggest that Athenian producers were well aware of the preferences and needs of their Etruscan customers and that they took into consideration the exigencies of the Italian market; this becomes obvious above all in the adoption of several Etruscan shapes into the Athenian repertoire. It is safe to assume that export activity from Attica was not connected to any Athenian interests, military or political, in Etruria. The sources provide no support whatsoever for making such an assumption.

The vase shapes and the particular preference for Dionysian themes and symposiast scenes further show the context in which this pottery is to be placed: the banquet and the symposium. This becomes obvious not only from the evidence provided by the artifacts found in tombs, but also from the finds from settlement areas and, at least in part, sanctuaries (where other factors such as particular connections to the deity were taken into account).[15] For sacred contexts, a more detailed study is certainly required.[16] In any case, in comparison with other Italic or even Greek sites,

13 Arafat and Morgan 1994. For Attic pottery in Etruria see also Shapiro 2000; Osborne 2001; Lewis 2003; Spivey 2006.

14 Reusser 2002, 1:12–14, 23–27.

15 Maggiani 1997.

16 See the excellent study of the Attic pottery from the northern sanctuary at Gravisca in Fortunelli 2007, 55–149, 309–34. See also Fortunelli and Masseria 2009.

it would certainly be wrong, in the case of Etruria, to speak of a limited and one-sided selection of shapes of Attic pottery.

There are some shortcomings in Arafat and Morgan's analysis. The lack—or insufficient consideration—of less well-known sites, the specific contexts in Etruria, and all the regions to which the Etruscans had spread, led to a number of statements that more recent studies have seriously called into question.[17] Attic fine wares were disseminated even to remote regions and to small contexts of very different character—settlements and sanctuaries, not only tombs.[18] The evidence forbids us to speak of diffusion only to urban centers and trading posts in southern Etruria (Chiusi is considered exceptional).[19] Bologna and Spina were not Graeco-Etruscan *emporia* but Etruscan cities—and in the case of Spina, with some Greek inhabitants.

Analysis looking separately at the different geographical regions shows that with respect to types, shapes, and imagery, the situation can differ greatly according to time and place, and that such differences must consequently be taken into account in generalizing surveys. It is erroneous to say that in the urban centers red-figure pottery ceased to play any role around the middle of the fifth century. An interruption did take place more than a generation later and must have had various causes, among which the decline of Athenian production and the almost parallel rise of Etruscan red-figure workshops must have been of central importance. There is no evidence for the supposed "return to old native values." There is, for example, no rise in the quantity of metalware.

In view of the wide dissemination of the imported pottery and the knowledge of central but also of quite specific Greek myths that can be traced to the middle of the seventh century onward, in Etruscan culture at large and in Etruscan imagery in particular,[20] a further question arises. Namely, was the popularity of these types really due to the fact that the complex mythological imagery was understood exclusively by an elite who could bolster their social standing through this "control of myth information"?[21] By reducing these vases to elements in an urban elite display, and by analyzing them exclusively under the aspect of "elite material behavior," a general assessment of their role in Etruscan society emerges that can hardly be considered convincing. The widespread frequency of these vessels in a large number of tombs, which is attested for the larger Etruscan necropolises, shows that we are dealing here with a wider cultural phenomenon, one which affected a large part of Etruscan society and is therefore of great interest in the assessment of social and cultural cir-

17 Reusser 2002.

18 Reusser 2002, 1:15–45.

19 For the early Attic imports to Chiusi and its region see now Iozzo 2006.

20 For Etruscan myths see de Grummond 2006, for the problem of Greek influence esp. 12–15.

21 Arafat and Morgan 1994, 117.

cumstances and interactions within it. The analysis of the data suggests a varied and very complex picture.

2 Attic exports within Etruria and Greece: A comparison of two cemeteries

In the case of Etruria, Magna Graecia, and other regions of Italy, a considerable amount of data has been subjected to detailed analyses. These allow the study of both the dissemination and the significance of Attic pottery. For the same regions (as well as for the Iberian peninsula and, most recently, the Black Sea area), some studies provide valuable surveys of the extant material.[22] This is not the case for mainland Greece. A few exceptions aside (among them Olynthus),[23] there is a dearth of similar studies. This is surprising considering the amount of relevant data available.

The extensive data from various necropolises on Rhodes, for example, which after the extensive treasure hunting of the nineteenth century were excavated and published by Italian archaeologists in the early twentieth century, have largely been neglected.[24]

2.1 Macri Langoni, Kamiros (Rhodes)

Among the Rhodian cemeteries excavated in the early twentieth century, the Macri Langoni necropolis (Fig. 56.1) is of particular interest,[25] not only because of its large dimensions and clearly defined topographical and chronological boundaries (later seventh to late fifth century), but also because it has yielded a vast number—more than 1,100—of artifacts, almost exclusively from single burials. The site therefore allows us to make statistically relevant statements and to compare the available data with corresponding Etruscan sites. The chronological focus of the necropolis falls in the second half of the sixth century and in the years around 500.

Macri Langoni—on terraces hemmed in by the sea, a small valley, and a hill—contains 257 burials of newborn babies, children, youths, and adults. The various types of burials are laid out close to each other, and consist of 235 inhumations and twenty-two cremations; around forty of these contained no grave goods, and around

22 Fless 2002.
23 Fless 2002, 27–40; Cahill 2002, 180–87.
24 With one notable exception: Gates 1983.
25 Jacopi 1931

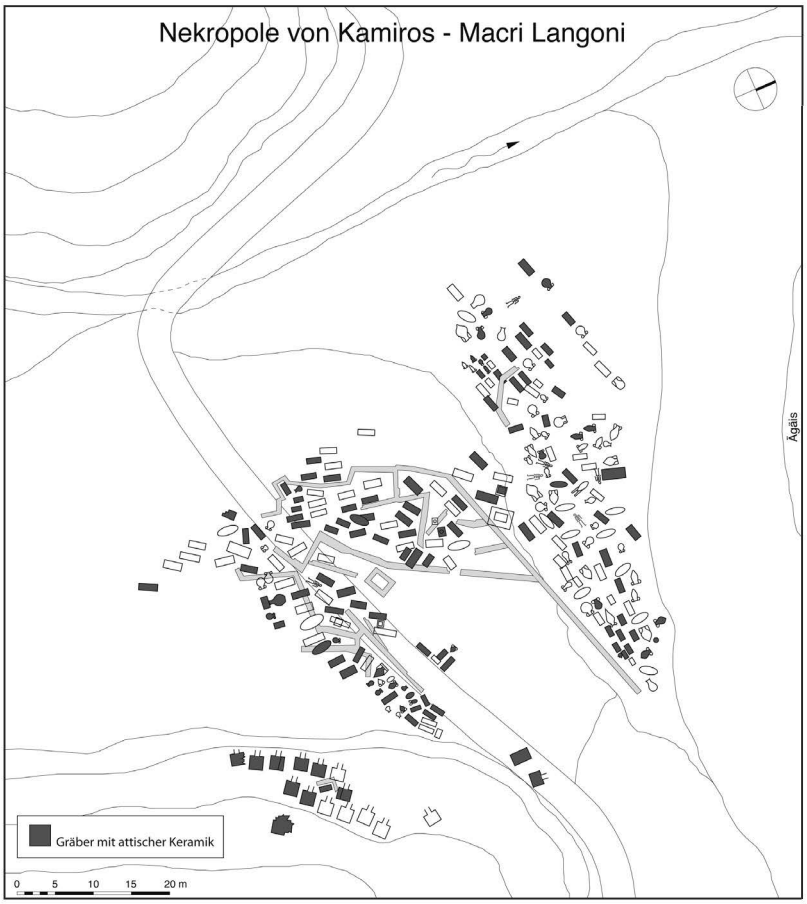

Fig. 56.1: Kamiros (Rhodes), Macri Langoni necropolis. Tombs with Attic pottery. Drawing by T. Palugyay, Regensburg.

thirty contained only scraps.[26] In Giulio Jacopi's detailed publication of the material, 198 tombs were presented, of which three were clearly situated outside of the cemetery and are therefore not considered in the following analysis. Some of the grave goods were placed on or immediately beside the tombs, where, at least in some cases, a number of transport amphorae were also found. Of the remaining 195 tombs, 130 contained Attic pottery (Fig. 56.1), whose importation began around the middle of the sixth century and continued until the end of the fifth.[27]

26 Jacopi 1931, 10–18, 30.
27 Jacopi 1931, 19–21.

Vases from Athens are present only in reduced quantities. Almost three quarters of the burials with Attic pottery contained only one or two such vases; only rarely were more found (on average 2.23 vases). A detailed analysis provides the numbers shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of tombs containing specified number of vases (Macri Langoni)

Vases/tomb	Tombs	Vases/tomb	Tombs	Vases/tomb	Tombs
1	59	3	9	7	1
1?	5	3?	2	8	1
2	30	4	11	9	1
2?	1	5	5	10	1
at least 2?	1	6	2	15	1

The 291 Athenian vases from these 130 tombs fall into the categories shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Vases per category (Macri Langoni)

Category	Number
black-figure	130
red-figure	35
white-ground	2
black-gloss	124

The shapes found are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Shapes of pottery (Macri Langoni)

	Black-figure (n = 130)	Red-figure (n = 35)	White-ground (n = 2)	Black-gloss (n = 124)
cups	49 (16 miniature)	5 (1 small)		44 (9 small)
small cups				37
lekythoi	22 (7 miniature)	3 (1 small)	2	5 (2 small)
belly *lekythoi*		3		6
olpai	19			2 (1 small)
oinochoai	14 (10 miniature	1		5
pelikai		6 (1 small)		1
amphoriskoi				6
neck amphorae	6	1		
belly amphorae	4 (1 miniature)			
skyphoi	5 (2 miniature)			5 (1 small)
hydriai	4 (2 miniature)	6		
phialai in Six's technique[a]		3		2 (1 small)

	Black-figure (n = 130)	Red-figure (n = 35)	White-ground (n = 2)	Black-gloss (n = 124)
salt-cellars				3
feeder				3
askoi		3		
alabastra	2			1 (small)
female-head vases		2		
psykter	1			
lekanis				1
askos				1
plate				1
stamnos	1			
column krater	1	1		
kantharos Saint-Valentin		1		
unidentified shapes	2			1

[a] Named after the Dutch archaeologist Jan Six.

2.2 Certosa necropolis, Bologna

The tombs of Felsina (Bologna), whose cemeteries are spread out along the ancient streets leading out of the city,[28] suggest themselves for comparison with the data from Macri Langoni because the burials fall into the same chronological framework. Moreover, the Felsina necropolises too consist almost exclusively of single burials and provide statistically relevant numbers of tombs and artifacts. Among the various cemeteries of Bologna, the Certosa area in the western part of the ancient city allows the strongest comparisons, not only because of the number of relevant tombs and grave goods, but also because it has been described in the most detail (Figs. 56.2–56.3).[29] In the nineteenth century, 418 tombs containing both children and adults and dating from the later sixth, the fifth, and the early fourth centuries (with most burials dating from the fifth) were excavated at this site; 287 burials were inhumations, 131 were cremations.[30] As to the age of the deceased, the current state of research does not allow for conclusions as exact as those reached for Macri Langoni. Of the tombs, 331 contained material, and the rest contained either no or almost no grave goods; in some cases grave goods were found but could not be identified and/or classified in any meaningful way. The tomb types are on the whole simpler; architectural features are lacking. Cremations occur much more frequently than at Macri Langoni.

28 For the Bologna cemeteries see Govi 1999, 13–28.
29 Zannoni 1876–84; Govi 1999, 13–18.
30 Reusser 2002, 1:70–75, 2:180–91.

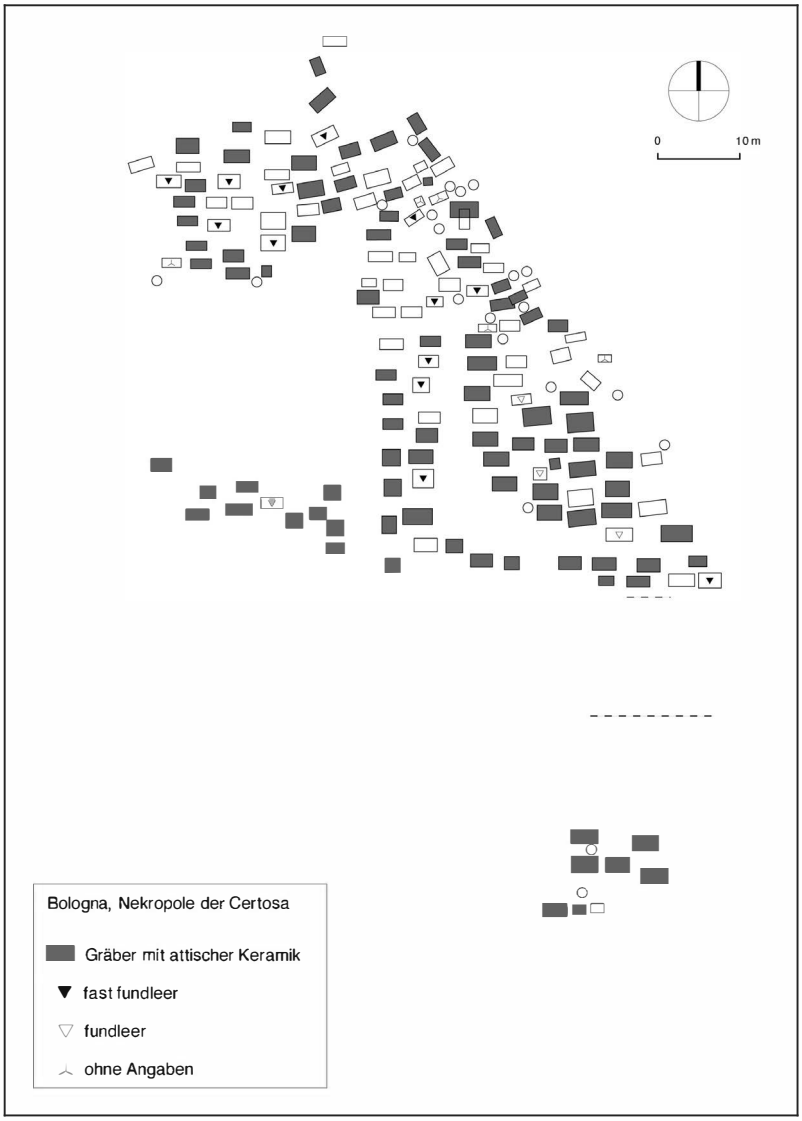

Fig. 56.2: Bologna, Certosa necropolis, western part. Tombs with Attic pottery. Drawing by T. Palugyay, Regensburg.

Fig. 56.3: Bologna, Certosa necropolis, eastern part. Tombs with Attic pottery. Drawing by T. Palugyay, Regensburg.

The Certosa necropolis contained 196 tombs with Attic pottery (Figs. 56.2–56.3), of which 440 examples were found (on average 2.24 per tomb). The analysis provides the details shown in Table 4.[31]

Table 4: Number of graves containing specified number of vases (Certosa)

Vases/grave	Graves	Vases/grave	Graves
1	85	at least 6	4
at least 2	53	7	2
at least 3	25	8	1
at least 4	16	9	1
at least 5	8	11	1

The types and shapes found are listed in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5: Vases per category (Certosa)

Category	Number
black-figure	100
red-figure	184
black-gloss	156

Table 6: Shapes of pottery (Certosa)

	Black-figure (n = 100)	Red-figure (n = 184)	Black-gloss (n = 156)
neck amphorae	14		
belly amphorae	4		
pseudo-Panathenaic amphora	1		
amphorae of unidentified shape	12	8	
column kraters	19	50	
bell kraters		6	1
calyx craters		5	1
volute kraters		4	
unidentified kraters		3	
oinochoai and *olpai*	16	5	24 + 2
skyphoi	6	26	33
cup-*skyphoi*(?)	2		

31 See Reusser 2002, 1:72, 2:180–91.

	Black-figure ($n = 100$)	Red-figure ($n = 184$)	Black-gloss ($n = 156$)
mastoid cups	5		
lekythoi	9		4
cups (with and without handles)	4	54	49
kantharoi	2[a]	4	1
alabastron	1		
pelikai	1	4	
phialai		2	
hydriai		2	
stamnos		1	
plastic vases		6	
(2 ram-head *rhyta*			
2 female-head *oinochoai*,			
2 female-head *kantharoi)*			
stemmed dishes of chalice shape			14
bowls			11
saltcellar			1
"*coppe*," "*tazze*," or "*tazzette*" (probably bowls)			8
"*piattelli*" (probably plates)			4
vases of unidentified shape	4	4	3

[a] According to Zannoni; the identification is uncertain.

2.3 Comparison

The data from Macri Langoni, Kamiros, and the Certosa necropolis, Bologna, correspond in a number of cases but also show some important differences. In Bologna, grave goods were placed only in the tombs themselves but not, as in Kamiros, beside or on top of the tombs. In Macri Langoni, imported pottery other than that from Attica (from East Greece and Corinth) plays an important role,[32] whereas in Bologna such pottery is almost entirely lacking. Instead, local ware, which is not common at Macri Langoni, occurs with some frequency. Further differences can be detected in the other types of grave goods but will not be discussed here.[33] At both sites, Attic pottery occurs in burials of adults as well as children, both female and male. The number of Attic vases in the individual sets of grave goods is limited in both cases; for the most part, there are only one or two vessels in each tomb, and only in isolated cases are there more than five. The average number of vessels per tomb is almost identical in both cases (Macri Langoni, 2.23; Certosa, 2.24). It is true for both sites that Attic pottery

32 Jacopi 1931, 21–23. 25–29.

33 For example, in the case of Certosa, the complete absence of terracottas and the comparatively greater importance of metal artifacts and jewelry are striking.

constitutes an important part of the respective sets of grave goods, and that the vases were not chosen at random but were, as a rule, consciously selected according to shape and partly according to imagery. The range of types of Athenian pottery found at each site is roughly the same.[34] That fact that in each case there is a difference in the percentage of black- and red-figure vases in the overall record can be ascribed to the different peak periods of the two cemeteries. In both cases, works of famous artists are largely absent, especially in the case of red-figure pottery, and at Macri Langoni the pots tend to be of poor quality. Black-gloss ware plays an important role at both sites, constituting around 35% of the total of Attic pottery at Certosa and around 42% at Macri Langoni.[35]

For all three categories (black-figure, red-figure, black-gloss), the range of shapes found at Macri Langoni and Certosa is roughly the same. The two sites differ in that black-figure mastoid cups (a shape that was taken over from the Etruscan repertoire) and red-figure *skyphoi* are absent from Kamiros, and feeders and red-figure *lekythoi* are absent from Bologna. Furthermore, large vessels are rare at Macri Langoni. In terms of the frequency of the various shapes, there are even more remarkable differences. Kraters constitute the second-largest group in Bologna but are almost entirely absent from Macri Langoni, where instead *lekythoi* occur in large numbers, as is the case throughout Greece. In Macri Langoni, black-figure cups are common but red-figure cups are rare. The opposite is true for the Certosa. *Skyphoi* are very common in Bologna but quite rare in Kamiros. In Kamiros, *hydriai* were deposited in tombs relatively often, but only in individual cases in the Certosa necropolis. *Oinochoai* and *olpai* occur in considerable numbers at both sites. It seems to be the case, then, that the differences in the arrangement of the grave goods are greater than the similarities.

In the composition of the imported Athenian pottery in Bologna, there is a clear tendency toward sets of banquet and symposium services (consisting of krater or amphora, cup or *skyphos*, and *oinochoe*)[36] and hence a conscious choice which is further suggested by the frequency of symposium or *Komos* scenes.[37] A similar tendency does not appear in Macri Langoni, where similar sets are found in only three tombs. In tomb VIII, a black-figure neck amphora, a black-gloss *olpe*, two black-gloss cups, and a black-gloss saltcellar were found.[38] In tomb XVII, a belly amphora, a cup featuring a symposium scene, and a *skyphos*, all in black-figure, a red-figure cup with a *Komos* scene; and an *omphalos-phiale* in Six's technique were found.[39] In tomb CV, a column krater, a cup, a *lekythos*, all in black-figure, and a black-gloss *lekythos* were

34 The only exceptions are white-ground *lekythoi*, which occur at Macri Langoni (albeit only two examples, and without figurative decoration at that) but are entirely lacking in Bologna.

35 For Attic black-gloss ware from Bologna in general, see Govi 1999.

36 Reusser 2002, 1:70–75, 133–36.

37 Reusser 2002, 1:74, 177–78.

38 Jacopi 1931, 64–69 figs. 41–44.

39 Jacopi 1931, 83, 86, 88–92 figs. 68–74.

found.[40] It seems, then, that in Kamiros, symposium and banquet ware did not play any significant role in the choice of the sets of grave goods.

In Kamiros, the imagery of the Attic pottery is dominated by rather generalized scenes with clad female and male figures, warriors, animals, and ornaments.

Mythological scenes, including the labors of Heracles, are very rare, and only Dionysos and his entourage occur somewhat more frequently. In Bologna, the selection of scenes is larger and more varied. This could simply be attributed to the fact that large vessels are present in the record in greater numbers.

One remarkable difference between the two sites is the frequency of miniature vase shapes in Macri Langoni. Importantly, these miniature vessels are not restricted to child burials, as is the case in Bologna. A possible explanation of this phenomenon may be that in Bolognese burials, shapes and sizes occur which were used in everyday life, whereas in the case of Kamiros it may be a matter of pottery specially produced or bought for use solely in tombs.

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